

Thunderbolt Blast

ARMOR SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

FALL 2021



ARMY COACHING PROGRAM (ACP)

Applications for the Coach Training Pilot are being accepted into the ACP web location. The great news is this training pilot is open to Enlisted (E6 and above), Officers (O3-O5), and DA Civilians (GS12-GS14) from the Active Duty, National Guard, and Reserve. If you have 10 years of professional experience, are at least 3 years before ETS or MRD, and have instructor experience, please consider applying. More information regarding this ACP Pilot can be found at <https://talent.army.mil/acp> or reach out to MAJ Dave Avallone and LTC Christine M. Baker at usarmy.pentagon.hqda-dcs-g-1.mbx.army-coaching-program@mail.mil

ARMOR CAVALRY LEADERSHIP AWARD (ACLA)

MILPER 21-356, dated 21 September 2021, published guidance for submission of unit ACLA Awards for FY22. Upon selecting a winning unit, a memorandum is submitted no later than 21 January 2022. The memorandum consists of the winning unit's designation and the full names of the Commander and First Sergeant along with the dates they served in position. The memorandum is signed by the Division or Regimental Commander. Update to MILPER: the point of contact for submission is MSG Allen Parsons at: (706) 626-1921 or allen.j.parsons.mil@mail.mil.

DIGITAL LOGBOOK/SMALL UNIT LEADER TOOL

Office of the Chief of Armor has been working a concerted effort with Combined Arms Center – Training (CAC-T) to develop MOS and position specific task trackers that will enable unit leaders to annotate and update their Soldiers training progression. This data entry tool will follow the Soldier for the duration of their career, enabling commanders to better place talent within their organization. This tool will be open source, allowing data entry with mobile devices. The working product is available for preview at: <https://atn.army.mil/digital-job-book/digital-job-book>

CHIEF OF ARMOR COMMENTS

Armor and Cavalry Leaders - Greetings from Fort Benning! As the weather begins to turn, I hope this note finds you well. Over the past several months, and despite a COVID spike, we were still able to successfully conduct recruiting efforts with both USMA and ROTC programs around the nation. Interest in the Armor Branch remains high, and our digital recruiting methods have been instrumental in our ability to find a bypass around the COVID obstacle.



Our main effort for September included a strategic airlift operation with the help of the New York Air National Guard, delivering via C17 one M1A2 SEPv2, one M2A3 Bradley, and one Stryker to West Point for Branch week. Our OCOA team did a fantastic job with static displays and branch briefs. We also conducted an in-person outreach brief at Texas A&M to further facilitate our number one Armor producing ROTC program. I also enjoyed attending my alma mater, Rutgers University, to speak to cadets there on why Armor is the combat arm of decision.

Concerning our digital recruiting efforts, Armor was the second most popular branch for interviews, placing slightly behind the Military Intelligence Branch and just ahead of the Infantry Branch. With 1,482 cadets completing Armor interviews this year, we doubled our numbers from last year. And of the 5,584 USMA and ROTC cadet seniors, 1,415 (25.3%) placed Armor in their Top 3. As we advance, we are excited to see the results of our digital recruitment and in-person events at the end of October.

LEADER DEVELOPMENT: MAINTAINING THE FOUNDATION (194TH ARMORED BRIGADE)

Within the Initial Entry Training (IET) environment, the focus of training falls primarily on the Drill Sergeants, Instructors, and AIT Platoon Sergeants at specific locations. Within the specific realm of the 22-week One Station Unit Training (OSUT) environment, Drill Sergeants and Cadre spend the majority of their time teaching over 166 Critical Tasks to future Scouts, along with the consistent daily care and concern we expect our NCOs to have for their Soldiers. This focus does, however, lead to the question of what do we do about continuing the development of our future Senior Leaders, especially when they operate in a repetitive and time consuming environment?

Leader Development is critical for the betterment of our Enlisted Soldiers. It is the responsibility of the Leaders within these training Brigades (specifically at the Troop level) to build and execute comprehensive development plans that are nested within the DA PAM 600-25 (US ARMY Noncommissioned Officer Development Guide) guidance for each MOS within their purview, as well as TC 7-22.27 (The Noncommissioned Officer Guide). Furthermore, while these manuals provide plenty of material to utilize, they do not close the gap between the consistent lessons taught within TRADOC (specifically the NCOAs) and the foundational knowledge at the unit level comprised of TACSOPs and TTPs. The process to create a solid career enhancing program requires several factors. The first is to maintain up to date information and an ongoing and current understanding of changing force requirements. The second is to maintain the expectations of leaders at all levels, as well as the knowledge base of everything from changes in doctrine to updated equipment (such as the changeover to the JBC-P from the JCR).

Part of maintaining a proper Developmental program is the understanding that we (the individual Leader planning the program) are not Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) in all facets of NCO requirements or tasks. We must understand the differences in our backgrounds, both prior to and during the military, and identify our shortfalls. Doing so allows us to facilitate SMEs in these respective areas to enrich the training that our Soldiers need in order to challenge not only their understanding, but our own. The practice of rotating in outside Leaders to assist in development creates an environment of constant and consistent growth. The secondary benefit of this process is that there is a marked reduction in feeding any ongoing or established confirmation biases.

With the current trends in promotion selection, specifically with the new implementation of the Evaluation Boards and the Order of Merit List (OML), as well as the impacts beyond promotion that your specific number carries, understanding your career and the paths necessary for success continue to be a critical component. The requirement that subordinate Leaders design LPDs within their respective Area of Operations serves two purposes: 1) continuing to understand the "pay it forward" ideology with the military, and 2) showing Soldier the care and concern we as Leaders should strive to exude for our Soldiers to emulate.

In addition to our gains in recruiting the next generation of Armor officers, I am also excited about our efforts to improve tomorrow's Army. As you know, over the past year, we have been working to address R&S and lethality gaps in our current formations. As of September, the FORSCOM Commander, GEN Garrett, decided to execute the Armored Division Cavalry Pilot with the 1st Cavalry Division. In this pilot, 1/1CD and 3/1 CD will begin implementing conversion in FY22 within ReARMM MOD windows. 2/1 CD will then transition after, with an estimated pilot completion by the end of FY23. At end state, 1-7 Cavalry will be the Division Cavalry Squadron for 1st Cavalry Division. As part of this pilot, each of the three brigades will possess an Armored Cavalry Troop, and all Battalion scout platoons will transition to the 6x36 configuration. This pilot will enable us to experiment, learn and refine our R&S formations at echelon to address recent gaps identified in the R&S summit. It will better enable the Army to move from the modular brigade to the division as the unit of action. Our team here at the Armor School is currently assessing impacts and initiating additional planning to assist this effort. As our team assists with the pilot implementation, I will keep you informed on our progress in the coming months. *Forge the Thunderbolt!*

BG Thomas Feltey, U.S. Army
53rd Chief of Armor

DOCTRINE

ATP 3-90.5, *Combined Arms Battalion* was published in July and is available on the Army Pubs Website at – www.armypubs.army.mil. The ABCT Doctrine Branch began the initial review and revision of ATP 3-90.1, *Armor and Mechanized Infantry Company Team* with an expected Initial Draft staffing across the maneuver and training force in 4th QTR FY21 / 1st QTR FY22. The Cavalry Doctrine Branch will be seeking MCoE approval of the revised FM 3-98, *Reconnaissance and Security*, with expected publication in 1st QTR FY22. Additionally, the Cavalry Doctrine Branch began the initial review and revision of ATP 3-20.97, *Cavalry Troop* with an expected Initial Draft staffing across the maneuver and training force in 1st QTR FY22. DOTD and the DCTD branch teams appreciate the feedback received during the revision of each of these manuals.

DCTD remains dedicated to updating the force via the Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL) newsletter, the Thunderbolt Chapter of United States Cavalry and Armor Association Facebook page and our Twitter page (@MastersManeuver). For questions or concerns, please contact the Doctrine and Collective Training Division at usarmy.benning.mcoe.mbx.doctrine@mail.mil or through our Masters of Maneuver Twitter page.

DA PAM 600-25 UPDATES; INTRODUCTION OF PDPC ASIS FOR SSG, SFC, AND MSG





As of 1 July 2021, Human Resource Command (HRC) Enlisted Personnel Manning Division (EPMD) implemented Professional Development Proficiency Codes (PDPC) with additional skill identifiers (ASI) 6H (minimally qualified SSG), 7H (minimally qualified SFC), and 8H (minimally qualified MSG). Armor Proponent defines "minimally qualified" as serving a minimum of 24 months in a Career Developmental (CD) position commensurate to the rank required to fill the position. NCOs serving in positions of increased responsibility will receive credit applied to the CD position aligned to their current rank. Example: Sergeants First Class that are rated as First Sergeants will receive credit towards their Platoon Sergeant CD requirements.

LETHALITY BRIGADE **(316TH CAVALRY BRIGADE)**

Ever busy, The 316th CAV BDE has experienced a number of exciting changes over the past quarter. Specifically, the Destroyer BDE has transitioned to become the Maneuver Center of Excellence (MCoE) Lethality Brigade, now responsible for nearly all of the Army's ground maneuver functional Programs of Instruction (POI) and receiving 1-29 Infantry Battalion into the fold as part of the process. The transition includes assumption of most Infantry School POIs while retaining all Armor School functional POIs. All told, 316CAV BDE now owns 25x POIs, ranging from Scout Leader's Course to US Army Sniper Course, training leaders from across the Force on behalf of the Maneuver Center of Excellence.

Along those lines, 1-29 IN recently completed the pilot course for the Army's new Bradley Transition Course. The purpose of the new course is to prepare MOS 11B, 12B, 13F, and 14R SGT and SSGs on orders to an Armored BCT (ABCT) with no prior ABCT experience, arming them with the necessary technical skills and proficiency to lead in an ABCT. Training is focused on familiarizing NCOs with Bradley Infantry Fighting Vehicle (BIFV)-specific training, BIFV maintenance and the maintenance process, and employment and logistics at the platoon and lower level. Soldiers will complete Gunnery Simulation Training (GST) familiarization training and drive/ride in a BIFV on the basic armored vehicle training track.

Finally, MCoE chose 316CAV BDE to experiment the newly conceptualized Armored Assault Company (AAC) for further concept development. The AAC is a conceptual company-echeloned formation that combines within the same company two platoons of infantry Soldiers with two platoons of Armored Mounted maneuver experts, the latter of which will be manned by a new MOS, the 19C (Bradley Crewman). In both a tactical training environment as well as in combat, one infantry and one Bradley PLT will operate in a partnered relationship, learning shared Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures (TTPs) while building trust and proficiency. The AAC has the potential to provide future combat formations flexibility, more Infantry combat power with a mounted capability, and increased combat platform proficiency, while allowing units to rapidly build expertise related to training, readiness, oversight, and sustainment. Elements from 1-29IN, 1-16CAV, HHT/BDE, and BDE HQ, along with a member of the MCoE Noncommissioned Officer Academy executed a live training mission demonstration on FBGA and recorded the operation and AAR comments to pass to Higher echelons for consumption. If approved by HQDA to proceed, MCoE will handoff the concept to a FORSCOM unit for further development and refinement. MCoE PAO and the 316th CAV BDE created a video which they will show during the Maneuver Warfighter Conference in the near future.

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	30th AG (REC)	LTC Frederick Babauta	CSM Antoinette Green		
	1-81 AR	LTC Nathaniel Davis	CSM Richard Meeker		
	2-15 CAV	LTC Ricarlos Caldwell	CSM Steven Smerer		
	5-15 CAV	LTC David Culver	CSM Larry Curry		
316th CAV BDE					
	COL Peter Glass CSM Carvet Tate				
	1-16 CAV	LTC Dan Snow	CSM Ryan Macey		
	1-29 IN	LTC Nathan Williams	CSM Jeffery Grothouse		
	3-16 CAV	LTC Daniel Cannon	CSM Noah Pugh		
	MATA	LTC Tim Palmer	MSG Aaron Marn		
199th IN BDE					
	COL Victor Satterlund CSM Roy Young				
	2-16 CAV	LTC Chris Kane	CSM Randal Edmondson		
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